

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

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R 261000 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000 X

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION NATO

USEUCOM

USDOCOSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 637

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS CY

SUBJECT: CYPRUS: PRO- MAKARIOS PRESS SAYS GRIVAS PLANNING COUP FOR
APRIL 1

SUMMARY: PRO- GOVT PRESS PREDICTS GRIVAS COUP ATTEMPT APRIL 1.
WE BELIEVE THIS IS WAR OF NERVES RATHER THAN SERIOUS
EXPECTATION. POLICE STATION RAIDS TAKE ON NEW DIMENSION
WITH TWO PERSONS INJURED.

REF: FBIS M 251141, NICOSIA 613

1. FBIS REFTEL CARRIES TEST OF STORY IN MARCH 25 PHILELEF-
THEROS CLAIMING GRIVAS IS PLANNING COUP ON NIGHT OF
MARCH 31- APRIL 1, TO COINCIDE WITH ANNIVERSARY OF BEGINNING
OF EOKA STRUGGLE. CITING " AUTHORITATIVE AND RELIABLE
SOURCES," PAPER SAYS GRIVAS PLANS TO ARREST ARCHBISHOP
AND OCCUPY PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, POLICE HEADQUARTERS,
CYPRUS BROADCASTING CORP. AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
ELECTRICITY AUTHORITIES. OBJECT OF COUP WOULD BE
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ENOSIS -- GREEKGOVT TO BE CALLED ON TO " FULFILL ITS RESPONSIBILITIES" TOWARDS CYPRUS AFTER GOVT OVERTHROWN.

2. COMMENT: PHILELEFTHEROS STORY MUST BE VIEWED IN CONTEXT OF GROWING WAR OF NERVES BETWEEN GOVT AND OPPOSITION MEDIA. RIGHTIST PAPERS HAVE BEEN HINTING AT A SPECTACULAR ON APRIL 1. PRO- MAKARIOS PRESS HAS RUN ARTICLES PREDICTING ASSASSINATIONS, ETC., APPARENTLY WITH VIEW TO A) BRINGING PRESSURE ON ATHENS TO DISAVOW GRIVAS: AND B) CAUSING PUBLIC REVULSION AT OPPOSITIONS' S TERRORIST METHODS.

3. PHILELEFTHEROS ARTICLE HAS GIVEN RISE TO SPECULATION THAT CANCELLATION OF EOKA DAY PARADA (NICOSIA REFTTEL) WAS RELATED TO GOVT INFORMATION THAT GRIVAS WAS PLANNING EOKA DAY DEMONSTRATION. POLICE CHIEF ANTONIOU, ASKED ABOUT PARADE CANCELLATION, SAID GOVT HAD " SOME INFORMATION" THAT GRIVAS INTENDED TAKE ACTION ON APRIL 1. HIS MANNER DID NOT INDICATE FULL- SCALE COUP D' ETAT WAS IN OFFING. WE NOTE ALSO THAT, AT GREEK RECEPTION SUNDAY NOON, NEITHER CLERIDES NOR FOREIGN MINISTER MENTIONED ALLEGED THREAT DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH CHARGE.

4. AMID MINOR INCIDENTS REFLECTING CONTINUING LOCAL TENSION, GRIVAS FORCES RAIDED TWO MORE RURAL POLICE STATIONS EARLY MORNING MARCH 25, AND FOR FIRT TIME SRIIOUS INJURY OCCURRED. (DETAILS FBIS M251224.) ONE OF BANDITS, DIMITRAKIS AFXENTIOU, WHO IS KNOWN TO POLICE AS GRIVAS SUPPORTER, WAS TAKEN TO LIMASSOL HOSPITAL WITH BULLET WOUNDS IN NECK. RAIDERS WERE DRIVEN OFF AT LEFKARA, BUT SUCCEDED IN BREAKING INTO XYLOTYMBOU STATION. XYLOTYMBOU POLICEMAN IN CHARGE OF STATION WAS ALSO INJURED, THOUGH LESS SERIOUSLY THAN AFXENTIOU. COMMENT: ABSENCE OF SERIOUS INJURIES UP TO NOW IS JUST SHORT OF MIRACULOUS. WE CONTINUE BELIEVE SITUATION LIKELY CHANGE QUALITATIVELY IF ANYONE KILLED.

5. MARCH 26 PRESS REPORTS GREEK NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER CHARALAMBOPOULOS HAS DEMANDED OF MAKARIOS DISMISSAL OF COMMANDER OF LARNACA POLICE STATION, FOLLOWING ROUGHING UP OF YOUNG NATIONAL GUARD OFFICER AT LARNACE CAFE. EVENING MARCH 24 SOME 25-30 PERSONS MANHANDLED OFFICER AFTER THROWING STONES AT AND DAMAGING CAFE. MININT HAS ALREADY APOLOGIZED AND ORDERED INVESTIGATION TO DISCOVER THOSE CONFIDENTIAL

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RESPONSIBLE, AND FOUR ARRESTS MADE SO FAR. COMMENT: MOTIVES

STILL UNCLEAR, BUT WE ASSUME ATTACK WAS POLITICAL.
GRANT

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